

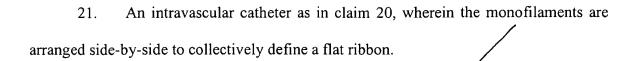
What is claimed is:

- 1. An intravascular catheter comprising an elongate shaft having a lumen extending therethrough, the shaft including an inner polymer layer, a reinforcement layer disposed about the inner layer and an outer polymer layer disposed about the reinforcement layer, the reinforcement layer comprising a tubular braid having a first helical member interwoven with a second helical member and an axial member disposed between the first helical member and the second helical member.
- 2. An intravascular catheter as in claim 1, wherein the axial member is movable relative to the inner and outer layers.
- 3. An intravascular catheter as in claim 1, wherein the inner and outer layers have respective inner and outer surfaces free of protrusions caused by the axial member.
- 4. An intravascular catheter as in claim 1, wherein the first and second helical members each comprise polymeric material.
- 5. An intravascular catheter as in claim 4, wherein the first and second helical members each comprise a plurality of monofilaments.
- 6. An intravascular catheter as in claim 1, wherein the axial member comprises a polymeric material.

- 7. An intravascular catheter as in claim 6, wherein the axial member comprises a plurality of polymeric monofilaments.
- 8. An intravascular catheter as in claim 7, wherein the monofilaments are held together statically.
- 9. An intravascular catheter as in claim 8, wherein the monofilaments comprise LOP.
- 10. An intravascular catheter as in claim 9, wherein the monofilaments are arranged side-by-side to collectively define a flat ribbon.
- 11. An intravascular catheter as in claim 1, wherein the first helical member comprises a metallic material and the second helical member comprises a polymeric material.
- 12. An intravascular catheter as in claim 11, wherein the metallic material comprises a highly radiopaque material.
- 13. An intravascular catheter comprising an elongate shaft having a reinforcement layer comprising a tubular braid having a first helical member interwoven with a second helical member and an axial member disposed between the first helical member and the second helical member.

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- 14. An intravascular catheter as in claim 13, wherein the first helical member comprises a metallic material and the second helical member comprises a polymeric material.
- 15. An intravascular catheter as in claim 13, wherein the first and second helical members each comprise polymeric material.
- 16. An intravascular catheter as in claim 15, wherein the first and second members each comprise a plurality of monofilaments.
- 17. An intravascular catheter as in/claim 13, wherein the axial member comprises a polymeric material.
- 18. An intravascular catheter as in claim 17, wherein the axial member comprises a plurality of polymeric monofilaments.
- 19. An intravascular catheter as in claim 18, wherein the monofilaments are held together statically.
- 20. An intravascular catheter as in claim 19, wherein the monofilaments comprise LCP.



22. A method of making a portion of a shaft of an intravascular catheter, the method comprising the steps of:

braiding a first helical member and a second helical member about a carrier such that an axial member is disposed between the first and second helical members.